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MACBETH AND KING LEAR

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Lectures 1-5

MACBETH: ITS MODERN PARALLELS; FAUST AND THE MAGIC SKIN

Shakspeare made dramatic poetry in general the poetical
reflex of the world's history.—*Dr Herman Ulrici*

Shakspeare has widened my own existence to infinity.—
Goethe

All the German poets have cast their vote into the urn and
declared Shakspeare the emperor.—*Heine*

The highest glory of Shakspeare's poetry is its spirituality.—
Henry Reed

The name of Shakspeare is the greatest in our literature,
the greatest in any literature.—*Hallam*

The myriad-minded Shakspeare.

The greatest intellect, who, in our recorded world, has left
record of himself in the way of literature.—*Carlyle*

The Englishman, who without reverence, a proud and af-
fectionate reverence, can utter the name of William
Shakspeare, stands disqualified for the office of critic.—
Coleridge

Definitions

- 1 Tragedy is a play of the passions ending in catastrophe.
- 2 Comedy is a play of feeling or fancy ending in media-
tion.
- 3 Historical drama is a view of national life within the
pale of authentic history. "A succession of inci-
dents" becomes a "combination of events." Person-
age is changed to personality. Facts become truths.
The past is put into the present.

- 4 Passion is high-wrought feeling filled and thrilled with thought. It is of the soul and must not be confounded with appetite, which is of the body. Shakspeare deals with passions, never appetites.

The four greatest tragedies of Shakspeare are *Lear*, *Macbeth*, *Hamlet* and *Othello*.

Othello is the most tragic and tender; *Hamlet* is finest-wrought, the silken threads of thought shimmer over the entire drama; *Lear* is the most masterly and magnificent; while *Macbeth* shows more than any other, the power of woman in making or marring the destiny of man.

MACBETH

What the Sistine Madonna was to Raphael, *Macbeth* was to Shakspeare, that kind of impromptu which comes from perfectly-disciplined powers. It is a specimen of Shakspeare's unelaborated works in their full maturity.—*Richard Grant White*

Macbeth is done upon a stronger, a more systematic principle of contrast than any other of Shakspeare's plays.—*Hazlitt*

In the grandeur of tragedy, *Macbeth* has no parallel except in *Prometheus* and the furies of the Attic stage.

Macbeth, the most awful creation of the poetic mind.—*Bucknill*

Macbeth is the tragedy of terror, terror in the imaginative presence of wicked temptations and of a fearful career of guilt.—*Henry Reed*

- 1 Give dates of writing this drama and reasons for this date.
- 2 What two stories were used for this play?
- 3 What changes were made in them and why?
- 4 What passions make the drama of *Macbeth*?
- 5 Is any passion unrelated to other passions in Shakspeare?

Lecture 1

TEMPTATION

Act 1

I have tempted the devil and he has come to me.— *John Bunyan*

Life's business being the terrible choice.

Why comes temptation, but for man to meet

And master and make crouch beneath his foot,

And so be pedestaled in triumph? — *Browning*

That which is a necessity to him that struggles, is a choice to him that is willing. — *Seneca*

- 1 What is Macbeth's first temptation? Give reasons.
- 2 What are the weird sisters?
- 3 How do they compare with the witch of Endor?
- 4 At what epoch do they appear to Macbeth?
- 5 How is Duncan's character a temptation to Macbeth?
- 6 What character contrasts with Macbeth?
- 7 What is the value of antithesis?
- 8 Give other examples from Shakspeare.
- 9 Give examples in art.
- 10 What is the danger from antithesis? Give examples.
- 11 What person speaks to save Macbeth?
- 12 What thought comes to save him?
- 13 What historical character believed in the same power?
- 14 What qualities of Duncan seem likely to save Macbeth?
- 15 What action of Duncan's?
- 16 Compare Macbeth's soliloquy with Hamlet's.
- 17 If fear of future punishment could save a soul, would Macbeth have been saved?
- 18 Who causes the final fall of Macbeth?
- 19 What means are last used to bring Macbeth to do the deed?
- 20 Do Shakspeare's women show this quality elsewhere?

- 21 Is this quality to be cultivated?
- 22 Contrast the lives of Lord and Lady Macbeth.
- 23 Contrast their characters.
- 24 What feelings are placed foremost with Lady Macbeth?
- 25 What feelings are outraged?
- 26 Which is the stronger character in this act?
- 27 In what respect is the marriage of Macbeth's an ideal?
- 28 In what respect is it not an ideal?
- 29 Give a quotation from Shakspeare that would make a true marriage.
- 30 Is this play true to Scottish character and scenery?
- 31 Have we any reason for supposing that Shakspeare visited Scotland?
- 32 Does Shakspeare make character change with latitude?
- 33 Give examples.
- 34 What touch of beauty relieves the luridness of this act?
- 35 What feeling influences the reader in act 1?
- 36 Where do we leave Macbeth in act 1?
- 37 With what quotation from Dante could we end act 1?
- 38 What is left to interest the reader?

Lecture 2

THE FALL

Act 2

The curious crime, the fine

Felicity and flower of wickedness.— *Browning*

The desire of power in excess caused the angels to fall.—

Bacon

Fallen, fallen, fallen, fallen

Fallen, from his high estate.— *Dryden*

- 1 How is the time of day a portent of coming events?
- 2 Is concealment the sole reason why most murders are committed in the dark?

- 3 What speech of Banquo's becomes further temptation to Macbeth?
- 4 What does it show in Banquo?
- 5 Where are witches in this act?
- 6 How does the analytical and imaginative mind of Macbeth show itself?
- 7 Does the dagger suggest confidence or terror, temptation or retribution?
- 8 How does sin in act 2 differ from sin in act 1?
- 9 What accompaniments to the murder?
- 10 Has history (profane or sacred) any parallel to this?
- 11 Give a similar example from Hawthorne.
- 12 Show the pathos in this act.
- 13 Is it art to thus relieve crime?
- 14 Why does Lady Macbeth need to take wine?
- 15 How does its effect show her nature?
- 16 How does Lady Macbeth show her womanliness?
- 17 How far off is Duncan's room?
- 18 Why does Macbeth bring away the daggers?
- 19 What after effect from Lady Macbeth's carrying back the daggers?
- 20 What does the knocking at the gate personify?
- 21 Is the porter's soliloquy appropriate to this act?
- 22 Where does Macbeth first show his hypocrisy?
- 23 Is this natural to him?
- 24 Why does he describe the dead Duncan so minutely?
- 25 Which is the most far seeing, Lord or Lady Macbeth?
- 26 Is this a difference of sex or character?
- 27 How does the murder of the grooms contrast with the murder of Duncan?
- 28 What change of character has been wrought by crime?
- 29 Why does Lady Macbeth faint?
- 30 Is physical sleep the only meaning to Macbeth's words on sleep?
- 31 What symbolism in the horses of Duncan eating each other?

- 32 How does Banquo proclaim his innocence?
- 33 Is he wholly innocent?
- 34 How do Lord and Lady Macbeth each meet the world?
- 35 How does Donald show his suspicion of the murderer?
- 36 Why is the old man introduced into the last scene?
- 37 How do some rank act 2?
- 38 What feeling is awakened by act 2?

Lecture 3

THE SELF PROPAGATING POWER OF SIN

Act 3

Proverbs 5: 22. 2 Timothy 3: 13.

In the greatness of his folly he shall go astray.

All that is human must retrograde if it do not advance.—

Gibbon

Lord of himself, that heritage of woe.— *Byron*

Then do men's lives become one vast disease.— *Sophocles*

Give ample room and verge enough,

The characters of hell to trace.— *Gray*

He who is bent on evil can never want occasion.— *Publius*

Syrus

Tremble thou wretch,

Thou hast within thee undivulged crimes,

Unwhipped of justice.— *Shakspeare*

- 1 Give three reasons Macbeth would have for the murder of Banquo.
- 2 Does Lady Macbeth have any influence in this murder?
- 3 What kind of people does Macbeth summon around him?
- 4 Why does Macbeth not commit these murders with his own hand?
- 5 Why do we have three murderers when only two were engaged?
- 6 Give the two theories about the third murderer?

- 7 What characteristic of Macbeth's is shown in this?
- 8 What is Lady Macbeth's part in scene 2?
- 9 Has her nature changed?
- 10 What are the ghosts in scene 4?
- 11 Have we had any suggestion that Banquo's ghost would be there?
- 12 How does Lady Macbeth treat her husband in this scene?
- 13 On whom has Macbeth come to depend?
- 14 What is his attitude toward his wife?
- 15 Why are they so seldom together?
- 16 What element of Macbeth's nature has been destroyed by crime?
- 17 What sentence from Macbeth in act 3 similar to one in act 1?
- 18 How has its meaning changed?
- 19 How do Lord and Lady Macbeth differ from each other in their relations to the world at this time?
- 20 Give the reasons for this?
- 21 What is the state of Macbeth's mind?
- 22 Why are the witches seen under the rule of Hecate? Why chided by her?
- 23 How have the witches changed?
- 24 Why do they always appear grander in the presence of Macbeth?
- 25 Is it the nature of evil to change with time?
- 26 Does evil change its aspect with different people?
- 27 Give arguments for and against Middleton's hand in depicting some of these witch scenes?
- 28 What is the condition of the kingdom in act 3?
- 29 Who is responsible for this?
- 30 Does crime simply curse the criminal?
- 31 Why should Lennox be suspicious of Macbeth?
- 32 What feeling influences the reader in act 3?

Lecture 4

DESTINY BECOMES DOOM, OR EVIL ITS OWN PUNISHMENT

Act 4

No man of woman born,

Coward or brave, can shun his destiny.— *Bryant's Iliad*

No man has learned any thing rightly, until he learns that every day is doomsday.— *Emerson*

Seek not to know to-morrow's doom.— *Congreve's Horace*

Fate steals along with silent thread,

Found oftenest in what least we dread.

- 1 What changes have the witches undergone since act 1?
- 2 What apparitions have taken their place and what do they each signify?
- 3 What do the eight kings represent?
- 4 What effect have all these on Macbeth?
- 5 Who takes Banquo's place in the play?
- 6 How do these characters differ?
- 7 How does Macduff's marriage differ from Macbeth's?
- 8 What moral purpose is served by these contrasting marriages?
- 9 Why does Malcolm give such a false picture of himself?
- 10 How does he differ from his father?
- 11 Which is the stronger influence in life, an inheritance from a parent, or the example of a parent?
- 12 How does the murder of Macduff's family cause the overthrow of Macbeth?
- 13 What law of evil is illustrated in this? Give examples from history, from other dramas.
- 14 What elements of character not found in act 1 does Macbeth show in acts 3 and 4?
- 15 What enhances this characteristic?
- 16 Does Macbeth show remorse?
- 17 What is the course of destiny in this play?
- 18 How do destiny and doom join in this act?

- 19 What opposite qualities in Macbeth and Hamlet result in the downfall of each ?
- 20 How do the witches of Shakspeare differ from the oracles of the heathen world ?
- 21 Why is the king of England, curing diseases, by a touch, introduced ?
- 22 How does evil in Shakspeare differ from evil in Milton and in Dante ?
- 23 How is evil pictured in Göthe ?
- 24 What is Emerson's idea of evil ?
- 25 What is Hawthorne's view of evil ?
- 26 What is Shakspeare's idea of evil ?
- 27 How does it differ from the Greek drama ?
- 28 Give cause of Macbeth's temptation ?
- 29 Give cause of Macbeth's doom ?
- 30 What feeling influences the reader in act 4 ?

Lecture 5

RETRIBUTION

Act 5

Matthew 7: 2.

Lost, I am lost, my fates have doomed my death.—*Ford*
And sitting on her throne sublime,

The vials of her wrath with justice stored.—*Percival*

Though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small,

Though with patience he stands waiting, with exactness grinds he all.—*Fredrich von Logau*

Which way shall I fly,

Infinite wrath and infinite despair,

Which way I fly is hell ; myself am hell.—*Milton*

- 1 What change is shown in Lady Macbeth ?
- 2 Give causes for this in her character and her life.
- 3 In this change what quality of the brain is left in full force ?

- 4 With what soul quality is this connected?
- 5 With what does the continual washing of the hands contrast in act 2?
- 6 What suggestion have we had of this sleep-walking scene?
- 7 Has Macbeth's sleep been affected by his crime?
- 8 Why has Shakspeare not given us the steps of change in Lady Macbeth?
- 9 Which is the stronger force in her nature, soul or intellect?
- 10 Has Lady Macbeth egoism by nature?
- 11 Has she this quality in act 5? Give reasons.
- 12 How does Lady Macbeth differ from Clytemnestra?
- 13 How from Jezebel?
- 14 What suggests the physical appearance of Lady Macbeth?
- 15 How are Shakspeare's women usually pictured? Give exceptions.
- 16 How is Lady Macbeth a tribute to womanhood?
- 17 Give the two different theories about Lady Macbeth?
- 18 How have Lord and Lady Macbeth transferred their characteristics since act 1?
- 19 What moral lesson is to be learned from this?
- 20 In what respect is Macbeth like Faust?
- 21 What saves Faust for a higher destiny?
- 22 In what respect is Macbeth greater as a moral lesson?
- 23 What speech shows Macbeth an infidel?
- 24 What is the cause of this infidelity?
- 25 When fate fooled him, what characteristics did Macbeth show?
- 26 How much goodness was left in Macbeth after his crime?
- 27 Wherein is Macbeth superior to Lady Macbeth in his death?
- 28 Which calls forth the greater sympathy in act 5?
- 29 What is the feeling excited by this act?

General questions

- 1 In which act does action culminate? Why?
- 2 In which act does interest culminate? Why?
- 3 Which is the most powerful act in this play?
- 4 What holds one's interest throughout?
- 5 What moral lessons are learned from Macbeth?
- 6 What makes the plot of Macbeth?
- 7 How does it differ from Ben Johnson's plot? *See Lowell on Shakspeare.*
- 8 Are Shakspeare's characters individuals or classes? *See Coleridge.*
- 9 Had Lady Macbeth been true to right, what kind of a poem would Macbeth have been?
- 10 Why has Shakspeare never written such a poem?
- 11 How does the evil in Macbeth contrast with the evil in Richard 3?
- 12 How does the evil in Macbeth compare with the evil in Iago?
- 13 How much of Calvinistic theology enters into the Macbeth drama?
- 14 How much into the Greek drama?
- 15 How is Macbeth superior to Faust or to the Magic Skin?

Topics for papers

Each paper to be applied to Macbeth

- 1 Effect of conscience on character.
- 2 Effect of imagination on conscience.
- 3 Effect of superstition on character.
- 4 Effect of superstition on conscience.
- 5 Conscience perverted by pride.
- 6 Conscience perverted by gratified ambition.
- 7 Temptation destroying prudence.
- 8 Ambition in woman as wife.
- 9 Influence of marriage on character.
- 10 Is a perfect marriage a loss of personality?

- 11 "The lost law of Eden" in marriage.
- 12 The peril of wicked associations.
- 13 The peril of opportunity.
- 14 The power of the imagination.
- 15 The use of the imagination.
- 16 The difference between religion and morality.
- 17 Religion that is superstition ending in infidelity.
- 18 Infidelity ending in remorse.
- 19 A sensual heaven an actual hell.
- 20 Brooding over evil.
- 21 Sin its own punishment.
- 22 The distinction between remorse and repentance.
- 23 "Nemesis the artistic attitude of justice."
- 24 The knocking at the gate.
- 25 Macbeth as a Celt.
- 26 The personators of Macbeth.
- 27 The personators of Lady Macbeth.
- 28 Irony in literature.
- 29 Superstition in literature.
- 30 The modern parallels of Macbeth. Lessons from each.

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Lectures 6-10

KING LEAR: ITS MODERN PARALLEL, PERE GORIOT

KING LEAR

King Lear is, indeed, the greatest achievement in poetry of the Teutonic, or Northern genius.—*Dowden*

The greatest dramatic poem in all literature.—*R. G. White*

King Lear is one of the most complex of Shakspeare's tragedies.—*Moulton*

There is perhaps no play that holds the attention so strongly as King Lear.—*Coleridge*

King Lear is the best of Shakspeare's tragedies, for it is the one in which he is the most in earnest.—*Hazlitt*

Lear, the grandest of Shakspeare's tragedies.—*Mrs Jameson*

As terror in Macbeth reaches its utmost height, in King Lear the science of compassion is exhausted.—*A. W. Schlegel*

- 1 From what source did Shakspeare get his stories for this drama?
- 2 What is the connection between the Gloucester story and the Lear?
- 3 What era is pictured in this tragedy?
- 4 What is its sentiment?
- 5 How is unity preserved?

Lecture 6

THE TRAFFIC IN LOVE OR CHARITY DEBASED

Act I

There's beggary in the love that can be reckoned.—*Shakspeare*

We waste our best years in distilling the sweetest flowers of life into love potions.—*Longfellow*

Do not devour thy heart.—*Diogenes Laertius*

- 1 Is Lear insane in the first act ?
- 2 Give causes and reasons if so.
- 3 What soul truth is violated in this sale of the affections ?
- 4 Has history any parallel to this surrender of the kingdom ?
- 5 Give resemblances and differences to the surrender of Lear's kingdom.
- 6 What wrong has Lear done ?
- 7 Does Lear show himself a judge of character ? Give examples.
- 8 Why had he not learned the nature of Goneril and Regan ?
- 9 How does Cordelia show her characteristics ?
- 10 What are they ?
- 11 With what hero of Shakspeare's is she a direct contrast ?
- 12 How is she usually ranked among Shakspeare's women ?
- 13 How is Cordelia's marriage a rebuke to Lear ?
- 14 Where does Shakspeare give the key to this drama ?
- 15 What excuse has Edmund for his conduct ?
- 16 In what is he like Richard 3 ?
- 17 How does Edmund's belief about evil differ from his father's ?
- 18 What characteristic in each explains this ?
- 19 Has Goneril any excuse for her conduct ?
- 20 What does Kent personify ?
- 21 What character is the opposite of Kent ?
- 22 How is he ranked among Shakspeare's characters ?
- 23 Give the special reason for giving each their rank.
- 24 What is the fool ?
- 25 Why is he needed ?
- 26 What served the same purpose in the Greek drama ?
- 27 Wherein lies " the sublimity " of the fool's sayings ?
- 28 Is this kind of humor in keeping with the grandeur of this tragedy ?
- 29 In what form is Lear's curse to his daughter given ?
- 30 Can you find a parallel to this in Shakspeare ?

- 31 Is Lear's fear of madness in accordance with medical science?
- 32 With what feelings do we regard Lear in this act?

Lecture 7

PURCHASED LOVE, INGRATITUDE

Act 2

Blow, blow, thou winter wind
 Thou art not so unkind,
 As man's ingratitude.— *Shakspeare*
 You have a law, lords, that without remorse
 Dooms such as are belepr'd with the curse^{sk}
 Of foul ingratitude unto death.— *Beaumont and Fletcher*
 Besotted, base ingratitude.— *Milton*

- 1 Why is Gloucester so easily deceived by Edmund?
- 2 How does he differ from Lear in his treatment of his child?
- 3 What reason is there for setting Kent in the stocks?
- 4 Why does he sleep so contentedly in such a place?
- 5 Why is Edgar a difficult character for the actors?
- 6 How does he show himself the most Christian character in this entire drama?
- 7 What is his natural character?
- 8 How is this a fault?
- 9 How are we led to hope that Regan will be kind to Lear?
- 10 What fickleness does Lear show?
- 11 Is this characteristic of him?
- 12 What new lesson has he learned in life?
- 13 Why does the fool put extremes of cruelty and kindness in the same family?
- 14 Does Regan defend her sister from sisterly affection?
- 15 How does she show herself more cruel than Goneril?

- 16 To what false idea does Lear still cling?
- 17 How have our feelings changed toward Lear since act 1?
- 18 What does the purchased love become?
- 19 Define this by antithetical words.
- 20 Give resemblances and difference in Regan and Goneril.
- 21 What has each inherited from the father?
- 22 How do they differ from Shakspeare's other women?
- 23 Have they any parallel in literature?
- 24 Why are they put in pairs?
- 25 From what animal are the terms applied to them borrowed?
- 26 Give other examples in literature.
- 27 From what source are these ideas taken?
- 28 Where does Lear show his fatherhood?

Lecture 8

THE HAVOC OF HATE

Act 3

Hail horrors.— *Milton*

All is not lost; the immortal will

And study of revenge immortal hate.— *Milton*

In unrelenting hate.— *Virgil*

Devoured with the hate of hate the scorn of scorn.— *Tennyson*

- 1 How does this act rank among Shakspeare's dramas?
- 2 What does Snider call it?
- 3 To what geologic era would you compare it?
- 4 What reason is there in this tumult?
- 5 What is the result of this tempest?
- 6 Why is the storm introduced?
- 7 How does the storm affect the brain of Lear?
- 8 What mercy in Lear's madness?
- 9 How does Edgar affect him?
- 10 Should the insane be put with the insane?

- 11 How does age affect native or acquired traits ?
- 12 What relation between the passions and nature ?
- 13 What is the effect of the storm on Lear ?
- 14 Is the gibberish of Edgar in keeping with the sublimity of this act ?
- 15 To what work of art can this act be compared ?
- 16 In what is the unity in each ?
- 17 Which has the most powerful effect, poetry or painting ?
Why ?
- 18 Show the pathos in this act.
- 19 What feelings influence the reader ?
- 20 To what does passion change in Lear ?
- 21 What lesson does Lear learn from Edgar ?
- 22 What lesson does he teach English kings ?
- 23 How is Lear a prophecy ?
- 24 What suggestions may Carlyle have found in Lear that he has elaborated into a book ?
- 25 How do doctors regard Lear's insanity ?
- 26 How many cases of unquestionably genuine insanity has Shakspeare given ?
- 27 What quality has been quickened in Lear by the loss of reason ?
- 28 Can you find any parallel to this in the loss of other faculties ?
- 29 What is the trial of the stools ?
- 30 What character disappears in this act ? Why ?
- 31 Why does Shakspeare give all the disgusting realism of the plucking out of Gloucester's eyes ?
- 32 What change of the action begins in this act ?
- 33 What feelings are excited by act 3 ?

*Lecture 9*THE PURIFICATION OF THE PASSIONS: SYMPATHY AND
COMPASSION TAUGHT*Act 4*

Unbounded courage and compassion joined.— *Addison*

It is the secret sympathy,

The silver link, the silken tie

Which heart to heart and mind to mind,

In body and in soul can bind.— *Scott*

- 1 What is the effect of Gloucester's blindness on his character?
- 2 In what does Gloucester place his hope after his blindness? Why?
- 3 How does Goneril show herself at the worst?
- 4 Which seems most vile, a good quality perverted or one that is entirely evil?
- 5 What is Albany's character?
- 6 Why has his better nature been hidden from us?
- 7 What was needed to fully arouse him?
- 8 Is this true to human nature?
- 9 Why was it necessary to have the French king recalled?
- 10 What new traits are shown in Cordelia?
- 11 Does she lose womanliness in becoming a warrior?
- 12 How could this be construed into a compliment to Queen Elizabeth?
- 13 What family relationship has Cordelia assumed?
- 14 What one virtue have Goneril and Regan lost?
- 15 Was it necessary to show them any worse than in the previous acts?
- 16 What lesson has Edgar learned out of his experiences?
- 17 To what has Lear's madness turned?
- 18 What does he give as the cause of his calamity?
- 19 Why is Gloucester's sin punished by blindness, Lear's by madness?

- 20 What feeling has this extreme of justice, in this judgment
of their sins, awakened in the reader?
- 21 What new trait does the battle bring out in Gloucester?
- 22 What opportunity does Edgar have to show his love for
his father?
- 23 What further purpose does his act serve?
- 24 Why is music furnished for the meeting of Lear and
Cordelia?
- 25 What is the effect of music on the insane?
- 26 Give some important example.
- 27 How does Cordelia meet her father?
- 28 What change has been wrought in her character?
- 29 Wherein did Cordelia resemble her sisters in the first
act?
- 30 Wherein does she show herself like her father in this act?
- 31 Why was this quality especially aggravating to Lear?
- 32 What feeling is aroused by this entire act?

Lecture 10

THE PROPITIATION OF LOVE; LIFE GIVEN AWAY

Act 5

John 15: 13.

Where once thou lovest, thou lovest forever.—*Quarles*

The offended suffering in the offender's name.—*Dryden*

"Love descends more abundantly than it ascends."

- 1 Why must Cordelia be defeated?
- 2 Who is the real victor?
- 3 On what side is the victory?
- 4 What is Albany's character in this act?
- 5 In what does his nature differ from all other characters
in this play?
- 6 Why does not Edgar enter the battle?
- 7 What quality does Cordelia show as a prisoner?
- 8 What makes the prison a palace to Lear?

- 9 What new quality has Lear developed?
- 10 What one quality has he kept in all the changes of fortune?
- 11 What reason has Edgar for desiring the deaths of Lear and Cordelia?
- 12 What has given him this reason?
- 13 Why must this be a part of the plot?
- 14 What are Edmund's excellences?
- 15 What one quality have most villains?
- 16 Do Shakspeare's villains always have this quality?
- 17 Why is long companionship in sin uncommon?
- 18 What law of evil is illustrated in this drama?
- 19 How does love in Goneril and Regan differ from love in Cordelia?
- 20 What lesson is taught by this?
- 21 What virtue does Edmund show at death?
- 22 Is this conversion or in accordance with his previous character?
- 23 Wherein is Lear the sanest of all?
- 24 What is the effect of a powerful crisis in life on the insane?
- 25 What has changed Lear?
- 26 How is this death-scene ranked?
- 27 Does Lear still show anger?
- 28 Has he changed in character?
- 29 What quality does Albany show?
- 30 What causes Lear's death?
- 31 Does he die insane?
- 32 Why must Cordelia die?

General questions

- 1 What is the religious setting of King Lear?
- 2 What Christian lesson does it teach?
- 3 What problem in life does it solve?
- 4 What quality of the mind does it demand in the reader?

- 5 How does the action of fate differ from fate in the Greek drama ?
- 6 What article of a religious creed does it illustrate ?
- 7 What is the difference between thought in Hamlet and thought in Lear ?
- 8 What causes "the superb language of Lear ?"
- 9 How does its diction rank in literature ?
- 10 With the grouping of what work of art can the plot of Lear be compared ?
- 11 Give resemblances and differences.
- 12 In what way is unity preserved ?
- 13 What artist tells one story by another ? Give examples.
- 14 Give an example from the Bible.
- 15 In what is this like the play of Lear ?
- 16 Compare Lear to Père Goriot.
- 17 What striking contrast between the two ?
- 18 Why was the acting of King Lear forbidden under one of the Hanoverian kings ?

Topics for papers

- 1 The hunger of love.
- 2 Ingratitude.
- 3 What is charity or love ?
- 4 The serpent in literature.
- 5 Man symbolized by animals.
- 6 Tyranny.
- 7 The patriotism of Shakspeare.
- 8 The loyalty of Shakspeare.
- 9 Does Shakspeare believe in kings ?
- 10 The medical knowledge of Shakspeare.
- 11 The woman of Shakspeare, an anti-Bacon argument.
- 12 The wits of Shakspeare, an anti-Bacon argument.
- 13 Age in Shakspeare.
- 14 The family relations in Shakspeare.
- 15 Why so few mothers in Shakspeare ?

- 16 Shakspeare's religious ideas.
- 17 Divine justice in Shakspeare.
- 18 The creative quality in Shakspeare.
- 19 The Greek and the English drama.
- 20 Shakspeare's truth to the era he pictures.
- 21 What were Shakspeare's sympathies politically?
- 22 Advantages from studying Shakspeare.
- 23 Epithets and phrases, and qualifying terms of Shakspeare.
- 24 Americanisms from Shakspeare; did Shakspeare use the speech of the people, or did our fore-fathers learn their speech from Shakspeare?
- 25 The miracle of Shakspeare; does the Bacon theory explain it?
- 26 Was Shakspeare better educated than Burns?

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